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1. SOVIET OFFICIALS INDICATE MOLOTOV OUSTER
IMMINENT

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Two recent reports suggest that V. M. Molotov may soon be removed from his post as Soviet foreign minister, possibly at the Supreme Soviet session scheduled for 26 December.

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Soviet first deputy minister of foreign trade P. N. Kумыкин, in reply to a question in early November, stated that Molotov would be relieved of his post as foreign minister at the next Supreme Soviet session. According to Kумыкин, Molotov was too rigid to administer the "new" flexible Soviet foreign policy line properly, and would be replaced by Soviet planning chief M. Z. Saburov.

Recently I. G. Chechetkin, first secretary of the Soviet UN delegation, told a US UN representative he believed there would be a number of changes in the Soviet Foreign Ministry in the near future. He added that A. F. Dobrynin, former counselor-minister of the Soviet embassy in the United States, had taken a "very big chance" in becoming Molotov's personal assistant.

Comment

Molotov's position has become increasingly insecure during 1955. V. V. Kuznetsov and A. A. Gromyko, both first deputy foreign ministers, are generally regarded as more likely candidates than Saburov.

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2. HUNGARY'S ENTRY INTO UN SPARKS LOCAL ANTI-US REACTION

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[REDACTED] Since Hungary's admission to the UN, the American legation in Budapest has received an unusual number of anonymous telephone calls in which the callers denounce the United States as a traitor to the Hungarian people and question America's adherence to the moral principles it professes.

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[REDACTED] has told the legation that popular reaction in rural areas in northern Hungary is unexpectedly strong and vocal, and that his impression was that the people, already depressed, equate Hungary's admission into the UN with driving the last nail into their coffin.

The legation reports that the regime is exploiting the situation by editorials proclaiming the victory of the socialist states over an isolated United States.

Comment

A sense of hopelessness has become increasingly apparent among the populations of several of the Satellites since the Geneva conference in July. Though no reaction reports have been received from Rumania, Bulgaria or Albania, which were admitted to the United Nations at the same time, the UN vote will probably increase the belief of many in the Satellites that the only way they can improve their standard of living is to support Communist programs.

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3. THAI PREMIER MAY USE RESIGNATION AS DEVICE TO RESHUFFLE CABINET

Comment on:

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Although Premier Phibun evaded the issue in a 23 December press conference, it is probable that he is considering either resignation or dissolution of his cabinet as a strategem to reduce the influence of Police Director General Phao.

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the premier had, in fact, informed the cabinet of his intention to resign in the next few weeks.

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any resignation would be simply a formality and that Phibun would immediately form a new government excluding certain ministers who have been "creating difficulties." Government newspapers, in an evident attempt to discredit General Phao's faction as well as the police, are stressing Phibun's irritation over disregard of his orders to investigate police corruption and put into effect certain democratic reforms.

Although it is uncertain how far Phibun intends to press his campaign against Phao, these developments foreshadow a period of greater political tension in Bangkok.

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4. AFGHANISTAN MAKES OVERTURES TO US AND PAKISTAN

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The American embassies in Kabul and Karachi report that the Afghan government is making friendly overtures to the United States and Pakistan.

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Finance Minister Malik, a strong supporter of Prime Minister Daud, has accepted an invitation to visit the United States.

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Foreign Minister Naim has suggested to the Pakistani chargé in Kabul that the Pakistani governor general visit Kabul as guest of the king.

The Afghan government has asked the Morrison-Knudsen Company to construct a new headquarters building in Kabul for the Helmand Valley Authority. The company has also been granted \$200,000 for work on Kandahar airport.

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**5. BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENT REPORTED EXPECTING
COUP**

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The Bolivian government is reported to be expecting a coup "on or about 23 December." On 22 December the government notified all militant members of the governing Nationalist Revolutionary Movement Party of a state of emergency, and ordered all police and carabineros to remain at their posts on a stand-by basis.

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Comment

Should a coup be attempted, it probably would be by the Coalition of Anti-Communist Parties, notably the extreme rightist Bolivian Socialist Falange, which attempted a coup in November 1953. The government should have no difficulty in containing any coup attempt by these forces.

The rumors of a coup may have been government-instigated to serve as a pretext for not granting a promised Christmas amnesty to political prisoners, many of them members of the Falange.

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THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION
(Information as of 1700, 23 December)

No significant military activity has been reported.

Israeli prime minister Ben-Gurion has told an official of the International Labor Organization he is convinced war will start by June 1956 and perhaps sooner. The prime minister reportedly said it would be precipitated by either Egypt or Syria. This statement is in line with the general opinion among Israeli leaders that their country will be attacked by the Arabs when and if the latter feel strong enough to be sure of victory. The timing of the statement, however, suggests that it may be aimed at convincing the West that Israel is desperate now and that its requests for aid should therefore be granted.

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